

THE
Federated Church
OF SYCAMORE



**A Congregation of the
United Church of Christ &
Unitarian Universalist Association**

***YOU* ARE WELCOME HERE!**

A warm WELCOME to those visiting or checking out Federated Church!

We're glad you're here! Are you looking for more information about who we are, what we do, or how to get involved? Would you like to meet with Pastor Eric or get connected to others? Fill out our brief online [Connection Form here](#), and we will be in touch with you soon!

Federated Church is an Open & Affirming Community

In a time of deep division and vitriolic rhetoric around issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and where the dignity of people living with disabilities or mental health issues are often ignored, demonized, or turned into a joke, we promise to:

Welcome all people of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith expression, marital status & family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, physical ability, mental or emotional condition, economic and social status, and educational background to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our church family.

The Rainbow Flag: We proudly display a rainbow flag at the front of our sanctuary as a visual declaration of God's extravagant and inclusive love, as well as of our own "promise of welcome" to all people. Our prayer is that all can be their truest selves here. This flag serves as a particular signal that our church is a safe and affirming space for LGBTQ persons to be, to belong, to lead, to question, and to grow in faith.

Order of Worship | August 17, 2025, 10:00 am

All music can be found at the back of the bulletin.

*Please join in reading those parts printed in **bold**.*

Prelude

"Going Home"

Anton Dvorak/arr. M. Kim

Welcome & Passing the Peace

We invite you to like the video and/or say "Hi!" in the comments to let us know you're here.

Gathering Song #401 "O God in Whom All Life Begins"

Prayers of the People

Centering Moment

This is your time to center more deeply into the presence of God/Love.

We invite you to sit with the quotes below, and then: move through the Breath Prayer; ponder the Silent Reflection Questions; or simply sit silently as the music plays.

"People think the sabbath is antiquated; I think it will save us from ourselves... Rest is not the reward of our liberation, nor something we lay hold of once we are free. It is the path that delivers us there... Refuse to welcome people into the same chains that hold you. We get free together." ~ Cole Arthur Riley, This Here Flesh

"I am often struck by the dangerous narcissism fostered by spiritual rhetoric that pays so much attention to individual self-improvement and so little to the practice of love within the context of community." ~ bell hooks

Breath Prayer

Inhale: "I deserve more than exhaustion." | **Exhale:** "I reclaim a sacred rest."

Inhale: "I can say 'No'." | **Exhale:** "We can only honor our limits together."

Silent Prayer & Reflection

- Φ What happens to you when you go without regular rhythms of resting in God/Love?
- Φ Who in your life do you resent for resting well? How will you resist envy and join them?

The Prayer Jesus Taught Us

Our Father / Mother / Parent who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kin(g)dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Sung Response #485 “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go” vv. 1 & 2

Scripture [Isaiah 58:6-14; Galatians 6:2](#)

Sermon “Self-Care Will Not Save Us”

Musical Meditation

Our Shared Life & Offering

Offering Opportunities

Offertory

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that Love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Sending Hymn #539 “Won’t You Let Me Be Your Servant?”

Benediction

Postlude

“Joy in My Soul”

Mark Hayes

Thank you for joining us for worship today!

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

Serving us this morning are:

Pastor: Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Music Director:** Gary Mattin
Children’s Church Director: Bill O’Hagan | **Childcare Support:** Janis Schnurr-Trebe
Liturgist: Pam Kitterman | **Ushers:** Pam & Nate Kitterman, Linda Mason, & Allison Stahl
Ushers for Sunday, August 24: Paula von Ende and Bev & Skip Schramer

All music is used with permission: CCLI Copyright License #3234671; CCLI Streaming License #22467093

Prayers & Reflections for Practicing Sabbath

From *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human* by Cole Arthur Riley

FOR BOUNDARIES

God of boundaries,

Remind us that sometimes we need to walk away from people and situations for our own rest and survival. That when the demands of the world grow loud, we have full agency to choose silence and peace. The stories we tell ourselves about why we cannot do so are often grounded in guilt a guilt that has been carefully implanted by a society that believes we are products to be used and consumed. We have been pushed and pulled out of ourselves and our own de-sires. Grant us the courage to say "no" without apology, that we would meet the demands of this world with truth-telling and self-charity, knowing that our boundaries are holy ground. We will not survive by inching further and further away from safety. Show us that sometimes the boundary we fear setting marks the border between freedom and bondage. Be with us on the journey back to a solid voice. When we speak *no*, let it shatter chains. Ase.

FOR WHEN REST FEELS LIKE A RISK

Rested God,

We want more than a life lived exhausted. That you have woven healing rhythms of rest into our minds and bodies reminds us we are worthy of habitual restoration. Keep us from apologizing for our own healing, that we would know that when we pause or rest, we are restoring not only our own bodies but the very condition of a world held captive by greed and utility. We grow weary of societies who view us as more machine than human, more product than soul. The fear that we won't survive without overworking stalks our days. Liberate us from the depraved socioeconomic structures that require that the poor and vulnerable sacrifice their own rest at the altar of survival and opportunity. Protect us from tear as we rest with you, breathe with you. Remind us that the beauty and paradox of our humanness is that we were made to close our eyes, that we might see. *May it be so.*

FOR COLLECTIVE CARE

Loving God,

We confess that we are so accustomed to pushing through an exhausted state that we come to expect the same from those nearest to us. We mirror the demands made of us and dissociate from the reality that these demands have harmed us, have left us anxious and unwell. Reorient our souls toward more than self-care. We want more for one another than the same expectations that haunt us, the same brutal experience of living within the systems of this world. Free us from resentment and envy as we bear witness to the prophets in our lives who practice rest and boundaries well. Let them be our guides into deeper freedom. Help us to never get used to being used. We were made for more. And together we possess the mysterious power of regeneration wrapped up in our bones. *May it be so.*

Breath Prayer

INHALE: *I deserve more than exhaustion.* | **EXHALE:** *I return home to myself.*

INHALE: *May I rest,* | **EXHALE:** *that I might dream.*

INHALE: *I've given enough for now.* | **EXHALE:** *I choose rest.*

CONFESSION

God of the night,
We confess that we have chosen exhaustion over dreaming. We have been tricked—indoctrinated—into systems of dehumanization that allow the most vulnerable to work far more than their bodies ever should. We have set up an economy that demands we sacrifice ourselves at the altars of productivity and utility, that says we won't survive without our overwork. We have traded our own peace, our communion with our own interior landscapes, for the frenzied noise of an exhausted world. Even as we sense our own desperation for rest, we have still demanded exhaustion from those in our midst, welcoming them into the same chains that bind us. Forgive us. And have mercy on our weary souls, that we would locate the holy quiet, the divine lullaby that whispers within each of us, *You've given enough; you are worthy of rest. Amen.*

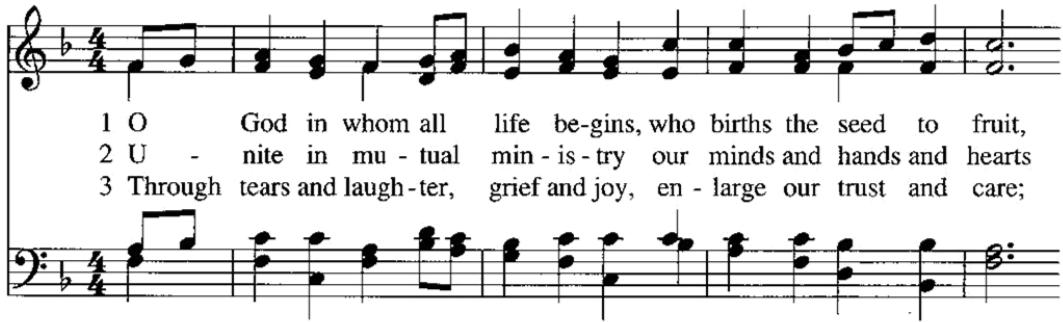
FORGIVENESS

Let your soul receive this rest: The God who sends the sun to sleep each night without apology, so too grants you the rest that has been withheld from you and your ancestors. She forgives us all our rest-lessness, that we would no longer be tormented by silence and stillness but find it a sacred reprieve from a world whose demand on our bodies is loud and unceasing. *Amen.*

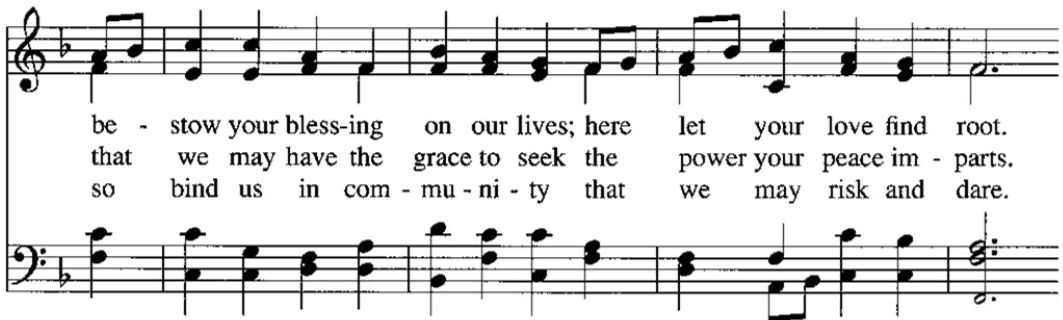
CONTEMPLATION—*for journaling & conversation with trusted partners*

1. What were your guardians' relationships to rest growing up? How has this formed you (in resistance to or in alignment with it)?
2. How do you contribute to the exhaustion of the world? Are there expectations you have for others that you yourself have experienced as a burden?
3. If rest feels like a risk or threat to you, explore why that could be. What is at stake if you choose rest over exhaustion? What could “community-care” over “self-care” look like—make possible—as a pathway forward?
4. Who in your life do you resent for resting well? What do they possess that you wish you could access?
5. What is your relationship to rest in this season? In addition to adequate sleeping, dream up other rituals of rest for yourself.

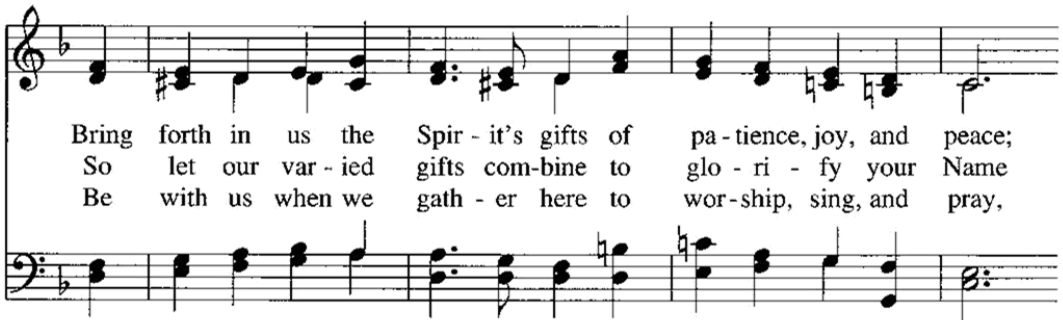
"O God in Whom All Life Begins" by Carl P. Daw, Jr.



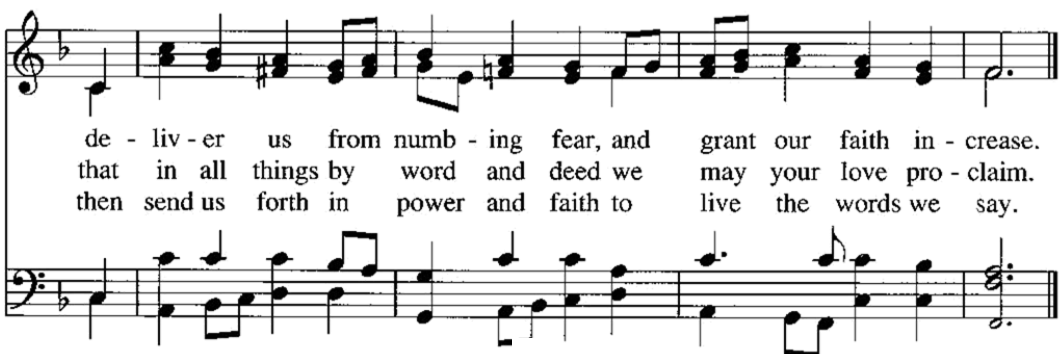
1 O God in whom all life be-gins, who births the seed to fruit,
2 U - nite in mu - tual min - is - try our minds and hands and hearts
3 Through tears and laugh - ter, grief and joy, en - large our trust and care;



be - stow your bless - ing on our lives; here let your love find root.
that we may have the grace to seek the power your peace im - parts.
so bind us in com - mu - ni - ty that we may risk and dare.



Bring forth in us the Spir - it's gifts of pa - tience, joy, and peace;
So let our var - ied gifts com - bine to glo - ri - fy your Name
Be with us when we gath - er here to wor - ship, sing, and pray,



de - liv - er us from numb - ing fear, and grant our faith in - crease.
that in all things by word and deed we may your love pro - claim.
then send us forth in power and faith to live the words we say.

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go" by George Matheson



1 O Love that will not let me go,
 2 O Light that fol - lows all my way,
 3 O Joy that seeks me through my pain,
 4 O Cross that rais - es up my head,

I rest my wea - ry soul in you;
 to you I yield my flick - ering flame;
 to you I can - not close my heart;
 from you I dare not seek to flee;

I give you back the life I owe, that
 Re - new my spir - it's fee - ble ray, that
 I trace the rain - bow through the rain, and
 Life's glo - ries with - er and are dead, but

in your o - cean depths its flow may swell with ar - dor true.
 from your bril - liant sun - lit day it may new bright - ness claim.
 know the prom - ise is not vain that you will ne'er de - part.
 from the ground there blos - soms red, life that shall end - less be.

"Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?" by Richard Gillard

1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
5 When we sing to God in heav - en we shall find such har - mo - ny,

The first system of the song features a treble and bass staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are numbered 1 through 5, corresponding to the measures of the music.

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.
We are here to help each oth - er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.
Born of all we've known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

(repeat stanza 1)

The second system continues the musical notation with the same treble and bass staves. The lyrics are numbered 6 through 10, corresponding to the measures of the music. The system concludes with a repeat instruction for the first stanza.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fall Fest Planning | *Sunday, August 17, after worship*

In preparation for Fall Fest (Sunday, September 7), a planning meeting will be held following worship on August 17. We are hoping for another inter-generational celebration, but we need your help to make this work. Sign-up in Dutton Hall. Questions? See Sharon Hollister or Pam Jackson.

Fall Fest | *Sunday, September 7*

Save the Date! Fall Fest returns this September. Details are still being planned, so watch for more information to come! Either way, we hope you'll mark your calendars and plan to join us for a day of inspiring worship, delicious food, fun-filled activities for all ages!

Meal Train

The church has set up a meal train for Twangie Smith's family. Twangie is in a hospital an hour from home. We've created this Meal Train (<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/03gwwv>) to help take care of her family's most basic needs during this time of uncertainty and strain. Use the link found in the eNews to view available dates. If you are unable to navigate the Meal Train and want to contribute to a meal, please let Karen Hamingson know.

Ladies' Night Out | *Tues., Aug. 26, 6:00 PM, Squire Ale House, Campton Hills*

Our next Ladies' Night Out will be Tuesday, August 26, at Squire Ale House (the former Forge) at 41W379 IL-64, in Campton Hills at 6:00 PM. We will meet beforehand in the church parking lot to carpool, for those who would like to do that. Squire Ale House has something for everyone, including burgers, sandwiches, chicken, steak, fish & it all looks delicious! Sign-up in Dutton Hall.

Ask Me Anything—the Sermon Series Returns!

After lots of positive feedback, we're bringing back our "Ask Me Anything" sermon series for the final two weeks of August (August 24th and 31st)!

Do you have a question on your mind that you've wanted to ask when it comes to faith, God, or Church? Or about Federated Church in particular?

For two Sundays, Pastor Eric will respond to the questions most on your minds and hearts. Nothing is off-limits: Sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll.... Your question could be as big and serious as: "What do I make of all the evil in the world?" Or, they could present a situation in your life (or our world) that you are wondering how to respond to, or what forgiveness looks like. Or maybe it's a question that came from a child. Or maybe it's more practical: why do we do something the way we do around here? Or, can the pastor please preach shorter sermons?!

Here's the catch: Y'ALL have to submit the questions for there to be a sermon! (So, I guess, if you want a really short sermon, don't submit anything!).

Please submit your questions using the button below by:
Wednesday, August 20, to be considered for Sunday, the 24th
Wednesday, August 27, to be considered for Sunday, the 31st

Submission forms are available at the back of the sanctuary or scan the QR Code.



Meal on Wheels Delivery | September

Federated Church partners with the Voluntary Action Center every April and September to provide drivers who deliver meals to those who are elderly, disabled, or home bound as part of their Meals on Wheels program. Each driver takes one route for a particular day at lunchtime.

Online Giving

Whether it's a recurring pledge, a one-time donation, or a contribution to a specific fund (e.g. the LOVE Offering, Pastoral Emergency fund, etc.), you can now make them simply and securely through our online platform. Scan the QR code to get started or see the weekly Enews for a web-browser link! *Contact the church office with questions.*



Weekly eNews



Scan the code at the left
to see the most recent
eNews & announcements.

Church Calendar



Scan the code at the right
to see the church's
Master Calendar of events.

OUR FEDERATED VALUES

We believe in God

At the center of our faith is the surprising, unsettling, and deeply personal God found in the Bible, most profoundly revealed in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. At Federated, our primary interest is not merely talking *about* God, but in *encountering* the Mysterious Force at the heart of the universe. This is a God who comforts us where we need to be comforted and challenges us where we've become complacent. This is a God who will not be confined to dogmatic teachings, nor even to the Bible. We believe that we are invited to encounter this God everywhere: in nature, science, one another, and in other religious traditions as well.

Each person is on a unique spiritual journey

We value faith as a journey rather than a destination. We recognize that each person is at a different place on their journey, so we focus on “testimonies” of faith rather than “tests” of faith; stories of how we are being transformed, rather than dogmas we must affirm. Here, you are welcome to belong, question, explore, and lead whether you grew up in church and loved it, or you've had a painful relationship with Christianity; you are welcome whether you feel your faith is unshakeable or you're not sure if you believe in God at all. You are welcome to join a community of people “on the way”: encouraging and caring for one another, learning and growing together, and serving alongside each other as we build, in some small way, the world we believe God dreams of.

Building authentic community across our differences

We are an “Open and Affirming” congregation, which is our way of saying that we value diversity. In a time of deep division, we believe it is paramount to gather people from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and identities in order to build authentic relationships and community. We believe that the simple but courageous work of showing up and being together in this way is one necessary element in healing our nation and world's deep divisions.

We believe in peace through justice

In this congregation, conversations regarding racism, sexism, poverty, war, immigration, homophobia, hunger, abuse, and a host of other issues are commonplace, both from the pulpit and around the table. We know that the Realm of God is not being experienced on earth so long as people are being hurt. With Martin Luther King Jr., we believe that we are all “caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny,” and that “none of us can be free until all are free.” Which means that, as a community, we have a God-given responsibility and mission to work for justice and healing in our neighborhood and beyond. Jesus says: “I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). This work is defined not merely by what we are against, but the vision we are for—flourishing for *all*!

“Welcoming Any, Loving All”

*The Federated Church is affiliated with two national denominations:
the United Church of Christ & the Unitarian Universalist Association*



Follow us on



Facebook & Instagram:
@FederatedChurchSycamore

www.fedsycamore.org

Church Office Phone: (815) 895-2706 || **Email:** Office@fedsycamore.org

Pastor Eric Cell: (815) 797-2250 || **Email** RevEric@fedsycamore.org

Director of Children's Church: Bill O'Hagan

Childcare Support: Janis Schnurr-Trebe

Federated Church Preschool, Director Bobbi Clough

Phone: (815) 764-9473 || **Email:** Preschool@fedsycamore.org

Address: 612 W. State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178